

**CITY OF BIGGS  
PLANNING STAFF REPORT**



465 C Street /P.O. BOX 1134  
BIGGS, CA 95917

PHONE: (530) 868-5447

FAX: (530) 868-5394

TO: Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

DATE: July 18, 2011

FROM: Scott Friend, AICP City  
Planner /Project Manager

FILE: General Plan Update  
Element Review  
Study Session #2

SUBJECT: General Plan Update Project: Element Review Study Session #2

---

**SUMMARY**

This report summarizes the direction and intent of the second of two scheduled study session meetings with the City Council to review the administrative draft elements of the City of Biggs' General Plan Update project. This report and presentation to be presented at the study session will present for discussion the following pieces of information:

1. Draft Introduction chapter;
2. Key policy issues on the Circulation, Economic Development and Public Facilities and Services Elements that warrant early input and direction from the City Council; and,
3. Staff will seek validation from the City Council of the previously selected Preferred Land Use Map.

Following Council direction on the key policy issues for each element, staff and the project team will continue work to complete and finalize the draft policy document. This will include finalizing and presenting the last remaining Element of the Plan (Land Use) as well as returning to the Council to present the final Circulation Diagram and to discuss strategies for initiating the environmental impact report (EIR) portion of the project.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION**

During the past two years, the City of Biggs and the General Plan policy team have engaged in various activities to support the continued development of the General Plan document. Beginning in 2009, a series of public workshops were held in January and March to engage the public and identify issues of importance to the project. Residents were asked to provide feedback related to the future growth of the City and to provide specific input on issues related to growth and development. At those meetings, participants were asked to engage in a public polling effort whereby respondents provided input via electronic voting technology on issues such as growth, development density and intensity, visual and aesthetic issues and public services. Following the two initial public outreach efforts, two meetings were held with the City Council to refine and select a land use alternative to be used as the basis for the plan. Meetings were held in May and June of 2009 for this purpose with the outcome being that the

City Council provided direction to staff and the Plan update team on a preferred land use alternative.

In addition to the meetings of early 2009, City staff and the project team held interviews with the members of the City Council and with various businesses and City residents to solicit input on specific topic areas and to identify issues of importance and concern. The information gathered as part of the public outreach effort, along with the inclusion of new State mandated information and input from City staff, has been used to create the draft elements to be reviewed as part of this meeting series.

*Meeting Format:*

Staff suggests that the Council review each element individually and provide feedback and input on key policy issues as necessary and desirable for each element. Staff believes that the receipt of early input on key policy issues will help the project team to better ensure that the public draft document accurately and effectively expresses the vision of the Council for the subject matter being discussed. Additionally, early Council input on the Plan will help to ensure that the Plan does not overreach or depart in a direction that could result in the unnecessary expenditure of time or budget.

Public noticing for this study session meeting has been undertaken through advertisement of the meeting in the local newspaper and the posting of meeting notices at City Hall and on the General Plan project update website. The meeting is intended to provide an opportunity for the City Council to ask questions of project staff about the content of each element; to provide a forum for the Council to collectively debate issues of importance in an informal setting; and, to provide the Council with the opportunity to direct changes to the content and direction of the materials being reviewed. This meeting has been advertised as a public meeting open to the public but it is not been anticipated by staff that the time allocated for the meeting is to receive public input. The intent of the meeting is to allow time for the Council to ask questions, seek information and provide input to staff on the Plan elements. Formal public hearings will be scheduled as part of the Plan approval process whereby public testimony will be formally received.

Staff suggests an approach to the meeting that utilizes consensus voting to provide direction on issues where a unanimous opinion of the Council is not present. Staff will receive the direction of the Council, and, where the direction is provided via unanimous consent or by a consensus majority vote, project staff will incorporate the item into the draft Plan as directed.

**Policy Considerations –By Chapter / Element:**

General Plan Introduction Chapter:

The Introduction chapter is an informational chapter within the Plan intended to provide the reader with summary information about the City, the purpose and need for a General Plan, basic Plan requirements, and a brief summary of each of the individual Plan elements. This chapter is intended to frame the basics of the Plan and general planning in California and to provide context, where necessary, to assist the reader in using and understanding the document.

Staff would note that the order of the element summary descriptions on pages I-5 and I-6 will be adjusted to reflect the actual order of the final elements in the finished Plan document.

The project team is not seeking any specific direction or input from the Council on this chapter. However, Council input on this chapter is welcome as appropriate and as necessary.

#### Circulation Element:

The Circulation Element is one of the seven mandated elements of the General Plan. The Circulation Element establishes the City's goals, objectives and actions related to the City's vehicular and non-vehicular circulation systems. The element is structured consistent with the layout of all of the Plan elements but has additional descriptive and explanatory information to establish circulation system context, provide an overview of the existing circulation system and provide data and information on the current operating conditions of the City's roadway network. Of particular importance to the Circulation Element are the descriptions and definitions of roadway types within the City and the determination of traffic level of service standards. Sections V and VI of the element provide a definition for roadway typologies and present data indicating the current levels of service provided by the City's roadway circulation system. The goals, policies and actions of the element begin on Page Circ-17. Goals, policies and actions for all modes of transportation to include motor vehicles and trucks, bicycles, pedestrians and rail are addressed.

The primary additions that have been made to the Circulation Element beyond what is included in the City's current General Plan include a heightened level of focus on non-vehicular modes of travel; the introduction of the Complete Streets concept; and, the placement of a heightened level of importance on the establishment of a comprehensive set of street design and construction standards. The goals, policies and actions section of the document have not modified the City's existing Level of Service standards (daily vehicle trips) or the City's stated Level of Service policy (LOS C).

The project team is specifically seeking Council direction and input on the following items in this element:

- Appropriateness of the Element Vision statement (refer to top of Page Circ-1);
- Transition from the use of an "Environmental Thresholds" traffic analysis concept to the more established and complex "Level of Service" methodology to address traffic congestion and volume considerations (refer to Policies Circ-1.5 and -1.6);
- Incorporation of the multiple-mode concept into the City's transportation planning efforts; and (Policy Circ-1.6 and Action Circ-1.6.1),
- Receipt of input regarding aesthetic considerations relative to City streets (refer to Community Enhancement Element).

#### Economic Development Element:

The Economic Development Element is an optional element of the General Plan and is a new element for the City of Biggs. The purpose of the Economic Development Element is to establish a written Vision statement for the City and to establish goals, policies and actions which help to move the City towards the achievement of the Plans vision. The element is structured consistent with the other elements of the Plan with a brief overview section setting the economic development context of the City; a summary of various issue and opportunity areas surrounding the subject of economic development and the City's existing economy; and, the establishment of goals, policies and actions.

Because this is a new addition to the City's General Plan, all of the goals, policies and actions in the element are new to the City. The goals, objectives and policies that have been presented in

the Plan focus on the concepts of business retention and attraction; promotion of a business-friendly City environment; enhanced utilization of vacant and under-utilized properties; and, the establishment of programs and incentives to entice new non-residential land uses to Biggs. The policies of the plan seek to recognize the limitations of the City relative to the use of monetary-based incentives and the limited capacity of City staff to focus on economic development activities while continuing to provide a vision for the economic health of the City.

The project team is specifically seeking Council direction and input on the following items in this element:

- Development and use of economic development incentives (refer to Goal ED-1 and ED-6); and,
- Revitalization of the City's Downtown commercial core (refer to Goal ED-4 and supporting policies and actions) through the reuse of under-utilized properties.

#### Public Facilities and Services Element:

The Public Facilities and Services Element is an optional element of the General Plan. The City's existing General Plan contains a Public Facilities and Service element that addresses all of the topics of the proposed draft Element with the exception of social services. This element addresses topics of primary importance to the City and its residents such as wastewater, water, storm drainage, solid waste and electric utility service. The purpose of the Public Facilities and Services Element is to establish a vision for how the City would like to see public facilities and services provided in the City and to outline a program of goals, policies and actions that can be utilized to guide the City toward the realization of the element vision statement.

The draft element does not establish firm quantitative standards or service delivery thresholds (e.g. minimum water system pressures, wastewater treatment plant design criteria, storm drainage standards, etc) but rather relies on the preparation, implementation and maintenance of facilities Master Plans for those purposes. The goals, policies and actions of the element instead focus on the advancement of core City values to include quality, cost-efficiency, reliability and adequacy of the services provided.

The project team is specifically seeking Council direction and input on the following items in this element:

- Focus on the preparation and maintenance of facilities Master Plans for each of the core public services being delivered to City residents (refer to Policies PFS-2.4, -3.3, -4.1, and -5.1 and corresponding action statements); and,
- Adequacy and depth of coverage for core public service topics.

#### Validation of the Approved General Plan Land Use Diagram:

In addition to the presentation of the Introduction chapter and the three draft elements described above, the project team has included with this report the previously approved Land Use Diagram for validation by the City Council. The Land Use Diagram included with this report was reviewed and identified by the City Council as the preferred land use plan for the General Plan update project in July of 2009 following the conclusion of a public outreach effort that included two public meetings; direct discussions with local business owners and project stakeholders; and, input by the City Council, land owners and members of the public at numerous public meetings. The project team has included the map with this report following a discussion with City Administrator and is seeking to receive input from the Council validating that the map as

presented still represents the desired direction of the City Council for the growth of the City during the planning period.

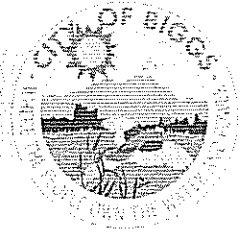
#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the City Council review and discuss the draft Plan chapter and elements and provide feedback and direction to the project team on how to modify the document components to reflect the vision of the City Council.

#### **Attachments:**

1. Chapter/Element Text (provided electronically)
2. Copy of the Preferred Land Use Plan Diagram

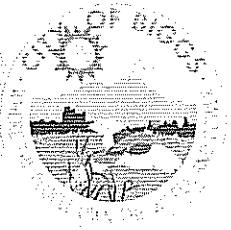
## CIRCULATION ELEMENT



### V. GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

- Goal Circ-1:** Develop a circulation system that is adequate to serve transportation demands of new development within Biggs at the City's desired level of service.
- Goal Circ-2:** Ensure that the circulation system protects residential areas from excessive traffic and considers other modes of travel that contribute positively to the quality of the City.
- Goal Circ-3:** Undertake the accomplishment of ongoing maintenance of roadways in an efficient and cost effective manner.
- Goal Circ-4:** Provide safe, convenient and attractive routes for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages throughout Biggs.
- Goal Circ-5:** Improve the availability and convenience of public transit within Biggs.
- Goal Circ-6:** Minimize the impacts of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks on the circulation system.

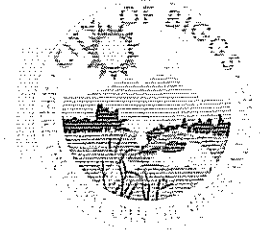
## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



### III. GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

- Goal ED-1:** Support the retention of existing commercial establishments and encourage new commercial and manufacturing development in the City.
- Goal ED-2:** Promote economic growth within the City of Biggs to ensure employment opportunities and goods and services are available within the community.
- Goal ED-3:** Build and nurture a positive economic climate that will attract highly quality base level employment opportunities.
- Goal ED-4:** Pursue the rehabilitation or removal of vacant non-residential development sites and work with property owners to foster opportunities to revitalize the city's commercial core.
- Goal ED-5:** Increase Biggs' visibility as a city by attracting regional public facilities.
- Goal ED-6:** Utilize the City's utility and infrastructure availability as a tool to entice new economic development opportunities and encourage existing employers to expand operations in the city.

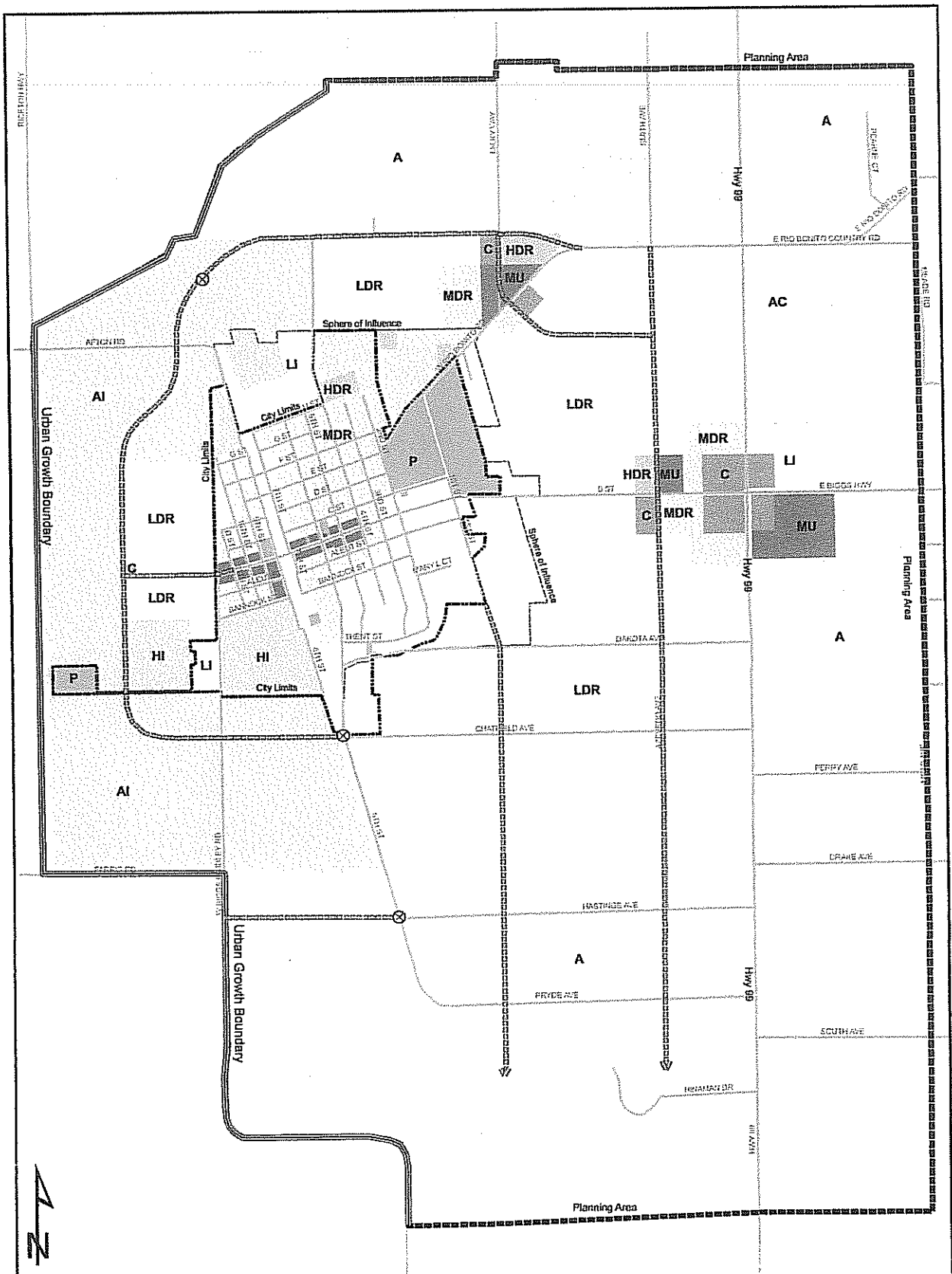
## PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES ELEMENT



### III. GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

- Goal PFS-1:** Ensure that public facilities are planned and constructed in a comprehensive and efficient manner and that new development provides for facilities on an equitable basis.
- Goal PFS-2:** Ensure an ample supply of high quality water and adequate treatment and distribution facilities are available to meet the present and future needs of the City.
- GOAL PFS-3:** Develop and properly maintain facilities to transport, treat and discharge wastewater in a safe and sanitary manner.
- Goal PFS-4:** Provide for the collection, transport and discharge of storm drainage in a safe and effective manner that protects people and property from flooding.
- Goal PFS-5:** Ensure that electrical service facilities are adequate to meet the needs of current and future residents and that those facilities are maintained and operated in a safe and efficient manner.
- Goal PFS-6:** Ensure that solid waste disposal and recycling services are adequate to meet the needs of current and future residents of the City.
- Goal PFS-7:** Support social service, education and health services to enhance the quality of life.





0 0.25 0.5  
Miles

## Preferred Land Use Alternative

05-22-09

- City Limits
- SOI
- Planning Area
- Proposed Road
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Potential RR Crossing

- A - Agriculture
- AC - Ag Commercial
- AI - Ag Industrial
- LI - Light Industrial
- HI - Heavy Industrial
- MU - Mixed Use

- DMU - Downtown Mixed-Use
- C - Commercial
- HDR - High Density Residential
- MDR - Medium Density Residential
- LDR - Low Density Residential
- P - Public

CITY OF  
**BIGGS**  
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

PMC  
PLANNING & MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS